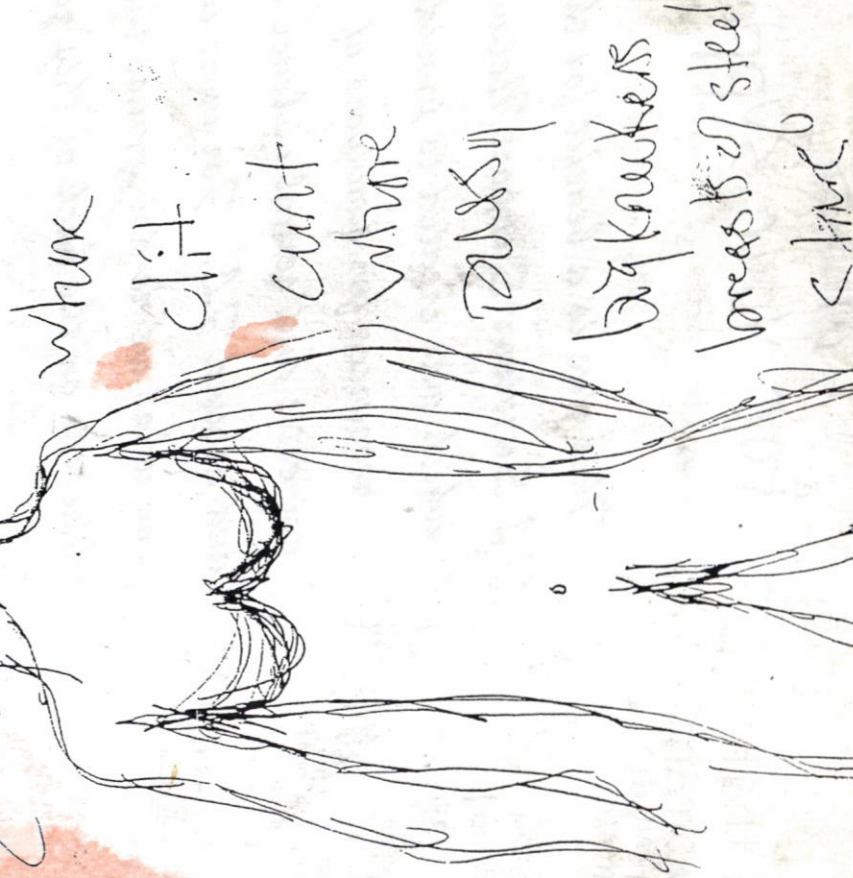


2866 Wildwood Drive
Clearwater FL 33761
fecuntah@yahoo.com



whore

clit

cunt

whore

pussy

big knickers

breasts of steel

< love

radical slut discovery:

building & re-building our sexual selves



what i think it is to be
to talk about most of our
to go on and on and on
community, i find myself
it doesn't seem to matter how
many orgasms you've had,
many orgasms you can make
anyone to be a slut.

♀♀



realize that
her naked and
now we go all goddamn
now this is different, show
show me something really good
with wild men, be a
let the experience

truly sexually experienced.

must you have sex, or how
or how much sex you've had
we can
with it
tell me your sexual needs

to be vulnerable
to be vulnerable
to be vulnerable

♂♂

this may not be a
we kissed enough, boys to know
we'll never, be different, be
be curious, let go, no need to
be in it, of to know what's
going on

♂♂

What this is all about:

Radical- of a root; fundamental, thorough.

Slut- a dirty, untidy woman.

Dis-discovery- the act of uncovering.

This is about 2 dirty and untidy womyn uncovering themselves thoroughly. We have a lot to get off our chests. It is strange to us how it seems like sexual assault is so invisible and yet it is so pervasive. It may be done behind closed doors *en secreto*. It may be something we are ashamed of and don't talk about or even admit to. But, so fucking many of us are survivors, and it may just be this silence that helps perpetuate this abuse. This is about empowering ourselves to stop cycles of violence. When we confront this head on it's really not so scary. It's much scarier in the dark.

The beginning of ending this silence is clarifying the language that we use to talk about this stuff so that we are all on the same page. Sexual abuse = violation of a persyn's sexual boundaries including harassment, molestation, rape. The bottom line is that when a persyn feels violated, it is sexual assault. It doesn't matter if that was not the intent; as long as it was the effect, it is assault. There are some definitions for specific forms of abuse in the book *The Sexual Healing Journey*. On a more general level, sexual assault includes, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate or unwanted act of a sexual nature as defined by the survivor
- Violence that intrudes upon something someone feels is private
- Making someone feel uncomfortable about their sexuality
- Coercion or manipulation
- Objectification

Who we are:

You can call me Midge. I like cats and the color red. I am a pack rat and have been known to collect stamps and keys. I'm passionate about mathematics and logic, analysis and organization.



Thanks for your support!

*This zine is a benefit for the
FL Survivor Support Network,
which was created to provide
resources for survivors of
domestic and sexual violence in
and around FL. For more info
on what we're doing, use the
addresses on the back of this zine.*



Smeechy Smeechy →

Last year i realized that
almost EVERY woman
i know (including myself),
and a surprising amount of
men too, have been
sexually abused
in some way.

it was something that affected
us all deeply, but it was
rarely talked about, and
seemingly even avoided at all cost
knowing these people and hearing
thier stories really touched me.
it made me realize that i'm okay
and it wasnt my fault, and we
helped each other grow and heal.

so i was thinking...
i'd like to compile a zine

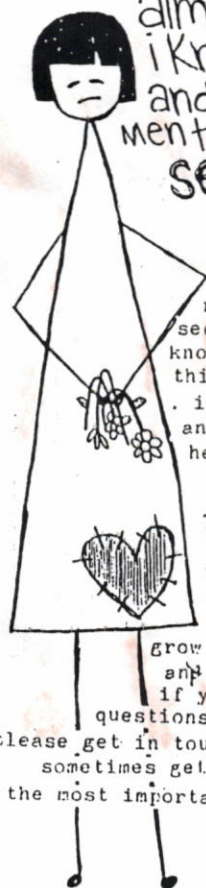
of people's experiences with
sexual abuse (on all levels).

maybe we can help each other
grow and heal and feel understood
and accepted.

if you have any ideas for this, or
questions, or if you'd like to contribute
please get in touch. its okay to be "anonymous"
sometimes getting it all down on paper is
the most important part.

andee.

xcrushslutx@hotmail.com



An Incomplete Reading List

- Books:
- Bass and Davis. The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse.
 - Bonheim, Jalaja. Aphrodite's Daughters: Women's Sexual Stories and the Journey of the Soul.
 - Buchwald, Emilie (ed.). Transforming a Rape Culture.
 - Daly, Mary. Gyn-ecology.
 - Davis Kasi, Charlotte. Women, Sex and Addiction: A Search for Love and Power.
 - Dreschler, Debbie. Daddy's Girl.
 - Eisler, Riane. Sacred Pleasure.
 - Kent Rush, Anne. Massage for Total Well-Being.
 - Getting Clear: Body Work for Women.
 - Khazoom, Loolwa. Consequence: Beyond Resisting Rape.
 - Maltz, Wendy. The Sexual Healing Journey: A Guide for Survivors of Sexual Abuse.
 - Muscio, Inga. Cunt.
 - Myss, Carol. Anatomy of the Spirit.
 - Nagel, Jill (ed.). Whores and Other Feminists.
 - Nestinger and Lewis. Growing Beyond Abuse: a Workbook for Survivors of Sexual Exploitation or Childhood Sexual Abuse.
 - Northrup, Christiane. Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom.
 - Ohlig, Adelheid. Luna Yoga.
 - SARK. Everything written by her.
- Zines and Articles:
- An Activist Approach to Dealing With Domestic Violence. C/o Planting Seeds: P.O. Box 33368 Austin, TX 78764.
 - Benderly, Beryl Lieff. "Rape Free or Rape Prone." Science Magazine.
 - Glenn, Patricia. The hospital, crisis counselors, the legal system and rape. Survivor. [I don't know where to get this and don't have a copy].
 - Women's Self Defense: Stories and Strategies of Survival. \$3-\$5 C/o Ariel: P.O. box 411621, Chicago, IL 60641-1621 or mspipplotta@yahoo.com.



Who am I? my friends call me emiliah & i love bugs & playing harmonica & i bake muffins to keep my sanity. i stay few places & love many
 i am oh-so very excited to be sharing all of this with you

How this project started.

In our 'anarchistic' community non-monogamy/polyamory had been unveiled as if it were the ray of light leading to ultimate freedom in our personal lives. But the whole sex-positive subculture thing just didn't resonate with me considering my sordid history of sexual abuse that has left me unable to be 'intimate' with anyone without debilitating flashbacks. I tried it for a while. Diving into it headfirst, as if it were a dumpster full of strawberries, increased the intensity of my preexisting unhealthy sexual behaviors. In fact, it made preexisting issues worse for me because it seemed to discount my experiences by making me think that there was something wrong with me or that I wasn't radical enough because I had a hard time/didn't really enjoy being sexually 'free.' The problem was that sexual abuse and survival from it were never even mentioned in the pro-sex hubbub. I didn't really know what was going on with me, I just thought I wasn't normal. Then I found out I was not the only one whose sexual history was hindering her from blazing the trail to 'radical' non-monogamy. My friend Emiliah found herself in the same boat. This validated my experiences and it became something I could talk about and work through (I had no fucking clue what I was getting into: years and years of work, that's what).

Once I began confronting the intensity of my fucked-with sexual self, I began avoiding sex at all costs. I justified it and joked about it by saying I was abiding by the No Kissing Policy (NKP). But, at the same time, it was a frustration to us that at radical event after radical event the standard non-monogamy 'workshop' was reiterated and disseminated to the populace, continuing to marginalize those of us who weren't exactly comfortable with that stuff.



It was December of 1999. The workshop schedule at the conference that weekend ran the standard gamut of radical workshops all the conventions do, including non-monogamy 101 run by the radical anarchists who are also running 1/3 of the other workshops. Me and Emilia had only had one prior conversation on the subject of recovering from sordid herstories, but it was enough to get the idea in our scheming heads to sign ourselves up for running a workshop notoriously entitled the Katholick Way to Radical Slut Recovery. (We have since changed the title to Radical Slut Discovery in light of the fact that we see the process as one of uncovering rather than covering again.) We wanted to talk about polyamory in a different way. We wanted to do a polyamory workshop for people who had marred sexual pasts. Thus, spontaneously emilia and I dreamt up, organized, and delivered the first (but maybe not the last) radical slut recovery workshop all in the time span of a few hours. In hindsight, I see the workshop as more revolutionary than I had realized at its inception. The overall message of the workshop, if it had to be reduced to one message would be 'get to know yourself sexually.' The outline included the following topics:

- Non-monogamy in our community is not always healthy
- There is such a thing as healthy monogamy (don't rule it out)
- Sexual pasts are influential and sometimes have to be worked through
- Many of us have fucked up pasts (we wouldn't use the term sexual abuse back then), lets recognize it
- Affection doesn't have to be sexual
- Resist getting in bed with people you don't want to get in bed with
- Set boundaries for yourself
- Be sexually communicative
- Female masturbation is ok
- Expect male involvement in birth control and abortion
- Respect your body and consider it when choosing birth control method
- Take care of yourself during abortion (try a letting go ritual)
- Define your sexuality yourself (you can even make up your own term like 'omnisexuality')
- Recognize that in radical activist communities, fucked up sexual tendencies are still prevalent (i.e. wimmin getting assaulted at activist gatherings)
- Who feels sexually repressed/oppressed? sexually repressive/oppressive? Assaulted or manipulated? Communicative? Polyamorous?

neediness is not ok

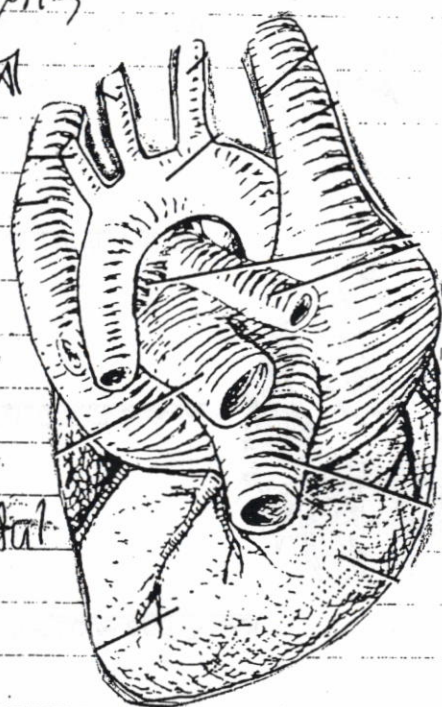
Age is not ok

Filter

Factors in developing Beliefs
Culture, family, employment,
genetics, chance

Core Beliefs

i am defective
i am shameful
i am unloveable
i am powerless over my life
i am unwanted
i will always be a damaged
my body is defective / shameful
ful



From the book:

women, sex & addiction
by
Charlotte Davis Kasl
(p.45)

Victimization

my essential personhood has
been violated or neglected

I was Sexually assaulted!!

- Steps that we as a community will take if puma does attack another person
1. Find more intensive help for him in a live-in program for repeat sex offenders.
 2. Call a public meeting to discuss puma's pattern of sexually attacking people.
 3. Actively monitor puma for the rest of his life.
 4. Very actively spread by word of mouth the story of Puma's pattern of sexually attacking people.

Where do we go from here?

Hopefully we've helped get some ideas flowing. I know that this has been a good experience for me making this. Please contact us. We would love to hear from you, get feedback. Also, if anyone has information about what other communities have done, I would love to get my grubby hands on it. We may update this to make a second edition at some point.

Sex Addiction

use sex to escape
use sex to feel powerful
use sex to get revenge

Operational Beliefs

See power when
see someone
I have control

Beliefs that reduce anxiety

don't care about those people
I can do it alone



Integrated Sexuality

Sexual Codependence
use sex to attract
partner
non sexual taproot
abandonment

Operationa (Belief)
I feel secure when
someone takes care of me
I look good to the world

Beliefs to Reduce
Anxiety
Boredom myopic (things)
will come... if I'm good
enough

Radical Cheer

Sound off! 1,2
Sound off! 3,4
Break it on down 1,2,3,4---3,4!!
My back is aching, my bra's too tight
My booty's shaking from left to right
Shout it out!!
Revolution!!
Enough is enough, us wimmin must rise up
Didn't eat today, no place to stay
So, kiss the back of my butt---ugh!
I'm a radical slut---ugh!

"Are you a manarchist?" Questionnaire

Kiss the back of my, kiss the back of my, kiss the back of my butt---ugh!

General Questions:

1. Do you ascribe to either:
A) "Passive-Aggressive Patriarchy:"
(often come across as a victim/helpless/in need/dependent and get wimmin in your life to be your physical and emotional caretakers? To buy you things? To take care of your responsibilities? pick up your slack? use guilt or manipulation to get out of your responsibilities and equal share of the work? do you treat your female partner like a "mom" or your secretary?)



What happened was pretty standard. The workshop before ours ran way over on time and roughed up our plan by leaving us with only 20 minutes before the conference ended. But, it was not an effort in vain. It has been over two years now and I am still in the process of realizing what is going on (working through confusion) and I think that first workshop sparked this revolution. It's helped work through my shit to assuring myself that it's not only ok, but best for me, to define my sexuality myself and not feel pressured into playing some radical slut role. I'm gonna be a radical slut on my own terms, thanks.

B) "Aggressive Patriarchy:"

(Do you often take charge? Assume that a woman can't do something right so you do it for her? Believe that only you can take care of things? Think that you always have the right answer? Treat your female partner like she's helpless, fragile, a baby or weak? Do you put down your partner or minimize her feelings? Do you belittle her opinions?)

2. How do you react when wimmin in your life name something or someone as patriarchal or sexist? Do you think of her or call her a "PC Thug," "Feminazi," "Thin-skinned," "Overly-Sensitive," a "COINTELPRO-esque" or "Un-fun?"

3. Do you see talking about patriarchy as non-heroic, a waste of time, trouble making, or divisive?

4. If a womyn asks your opinion, do you assume she must not know anything about the subject?

5. Do you believe that wimmin have "natural characteristics" which are inherent in our sex such as "passive," "sweet," "caring," "nurturing," "considerate," "generous," "weak," or "emotional?"

6. Do you make fun of "typical" men or "frat boys" but not ever check yourself to see if you behave in the same ways?

7. Do you take on sexism and patriarchy as a personal struggle working to fight against it in yourself, in your relationships, in society, work, culture, subcultures, and institutions?

8. Do you say anything when other men make sexist or patriarchal comments? Do you help your patriarchal and sexist friends to make change and help educate them? Or do you continue friendships with patriarchal and sexist men and act like there is no problem.

Activism

9. As a male, is being a feminist a priority to you? Do you see being a feminist as revolutionary or radical?

10. Do you think that you define what is radical? Do you suffer from or contribute to "macho bravado" or "subpoena envy"? (I.e. defining a true or "cool" and respectable activist as someone who has: been arrested, done lockdowns, scaled walls, hung banners, done time for their actions, argued or fought with police, done property alterations, beat up nazi boneheads, etc.)?

11. Do you take something a womyn said, reword it and claim it as your own idea/opinion?

- provide support for the survivors (emotional, strategic, legal etc.)
- provide an avenue of recourse for the survivors (consequences for the perp such as the proposed black list web page etc....also making sure that public functions stay accessible to the survivor and not to the perp....)
- provide advocacy for those who chose to remain anonymous.
- bottom line the creation of another committee to deal with rehabilitation for the perp if it accepted and possible.

4. OUTREACH: create forums, reading groups, zines, web pages, etc around all of these items.

Returning to the puma example, here is the list of tasks that community members agreed to take on. These are examples of things that a committee dealing with perps could do:

- I. Steps that community members will take to prevent Puma from attacking others [specific people took on responsibilities during the meeting, the number of people responsible for each is indicated in parenthesis]
 1. Monitoring: regularly check up on puma and ask him if he is following the steps, if he has assaulted other people, etc. (3)
 2. Talk to puma immediately if we hear from others that he has attacked someone else/ acted inappropriately. (3)
 3. Be on an emergency phone list of people puma can call if he feels he [needs to talk to someone]. (5)
 4. Making sure that people puma is living with/ touching with do know about his pattern of attacking people. (3)
 5. Reality check: being an objective, "mean" person that will very clearly state what is ok and what puma's past attacks "mean." (1)
 6. Passing the torch to communities that puma becomes involved with/moves to: we will make sure that responsible persons there know about puma's pattern of attacking people and which steps we have been taking to prevent further attacks and encourage the new community to continue our activities. (2)
 7. Put puma in contact with community resources for sex offenders. (1)
 8. Give puma reading material on sexual violence. (1)
 9. Offer puma transportation to counseling sessions, etc. (2)
 10. Work with puma on educational projects around sexual violence. (4)
 11. Discuss ways of overcoming objectification of women/people. (4)
 12. Be there as a friend to talk about what has happened and what puma is doing, thinking feeling about his past attacks, his current state. (6)
 13. Sharing thoughts on journal entries. (2)
 11. Talk about violence and control issues. (1)

- physical abuse = violating a person's physical boundaries including any non-consensual touching
- verbal abuse = violations committed by using words including belittling, not communicating, "outing" or sharing information about another person w/o their consent, and using gender specific pronouns which conflict with a person's gender ID.
- mental abuse = attempts to control one's thoughts including belittling thoughts and ideas
- emotional abuse = attempts to control one's emotions including guilt-tripping
- economic abuse = includes withholding money or controlling finances in any way.
- sexual abuse = violation of a person's sexual boundaries including harassment, molestation, rape, and physical abuse in a sexual context.
- consent = a verbal agreement in both intimate and platonic conditions, based on words in addition to body language (not saying yes = no).
- come up with some sort of list to reflect basic expectations of the community, which will form the basis of the task force.
 - take ourselves, our feelings and our relationships seriously
 - take responsibility to keep each other safe
 - have a commitment to communication, consent and cooperation
 - regularly address issues of violence and discuss dynamics
 - believe survivors
 - respect survivor autonomy
- make sure our community is accessible and safe for queer and transgender folks. (rumor has it our hetero hell rep goes all the way to canada.)

2. **RESEARCH:** general info, statistics, history, tactics (used in the past by us, by intentional communities, other radical groups, other cultures, religious groups, queer communities, rape crisis centers and shelters, etc.). I don't know any women who is not an expert on her own oppression and the fear and limitations that it creates but perhaps by educating ourselves as much as possible we can come to conclusions (which we will inevitably come to on our own as a necessity) much more quickly.
 - read "transforming a rape culture" and other material on the topic. read all the books in each bibliography, zines on these topics. etc.
 - get trained and train others in self-defense.
 - get trained and train others in conflict mediation
3. **STRUCTURE:** bottom line the creation of "permanent care bears" who would form a committee in the taskforce, implement and sustain these strategies.

12. Are you taking on the "shit" or "grunt" work in your organizing? (i.e.: cooking, cleaning, set up, clean up, phone calls, email lists, taking notes, doing support work, sending mailings, providing childcare?) Are you aware of the fact that womyn often are taking on this work with no regard or for their efforts?
13. Do you take active steps to make your activist groups safe and comfortable places for womyn?
14. If you are trying to get more womyn involved in your activist projects, do you try to engage them by telling them what to do or why they should join your group?
15. Do you ever find yourself monitoring and limiting your behavior and speech in meetings and activist settings because you don't want to take up too much space or dominate the group? Are you aware of the fact that womyn do this all the time?
16. Do you pay attention to group process and consensus building in groups or do you tend to dominate and take charge (maybe without even realizing it)?

Sexual/Romantic Relationships and Issues

17. Do you make jokes or negative comments about the sex lives of womyn or sex work?
18. Can you only show affection and be loving to your partner in front of friends and family or only in private?
19. Do you discuss the responsibility for preventing conception and getting STD screening prior to sexual contact?
20. Do you repeatedly ask or plead with womyn for what you want in sexual situations? Are you aware that unless this is a mutually consented upon scenario/game that this is considered a form of coercion?
21. During sex, do you pay attention to your partner's face and body language to see if she is turned on? Engaged, or just lying there? Do you ask a womyn who she wants during sex? What turns her on?
22. Do you ask for consent?
23. Do you know if your partner has a sexual abuse, rape, or physical abuse history?

24. Do you stay with your partner in a relationship for comfort and security? Sex? Financial or emotional caretaking? If you're not completely happy or "in love" with your partner anymore? Even though you don't think it will ultimately work out? Because you're afraid or unable to be alone? Do you suddenly end relationships when a "new" or "better" womyn comes along?

25. Do you jump from relationship to relationship? Overlap them? Or do you take space and time for yourself in between each relationship to reflect on the relationship and your role in it? Do you know how to be alone? How to be single?

26. Do you cheat on your partners?

27. If your girlfriend gets on your case for patriarchal behavior or wants to try to work on the issues of patriarchy in your relationship, do you break up with her or cheat on her and find another woman who will put up with your shit?

28. Do you agree to romantic commitment and responsibility and then back out of these situations?

29. Do you understand menstruation?

30. Do you make fun of wimmin or write them off as "PMS-ING?"

Friendship

31. Do you tend to set the standard and plans for fun or do you work with the others in the group, including wimmin to see what they want to do?

32. Do you talk to your female friends about things you don't talk to your male friends about, especially emotional issues?

33. Do you constantly fall in love with your female friends? Are you friends with women until you find out that they are not in love with you too and then end the friendships? Are you only friends with women who are in monogamous or committed relationships with other people?

34. Do you come on to your female friends even jokingly?

35. Do you only talk to your female friends (and not your male friends) about your romantic relationships or problems in those relationships?

- Follow up with survivor and offer resources
- Get financial reparations for survivor (by force if needed)
- Discuss abuse proactively
- Define forms of abuse publicly (to clarify language)
- Help abuser heal
- Hold speak outs (regular spaces for survivors/community to express stuff and share experiences)
- Have sponsor(s), maybe rotating, for perps (to follow up, support, and enforce the process)
- Believe survivors always (don't recreate court system)
- Don't pressure survivor to do anything (including not 'outing' them)
- Network (make a permanent WARNING list of perps names and some descriptions of behavior; if assault is more of a common place subject and its prevalence recognized, this will not be so controversial or considered a 'black list')

The option that we have decided to follow through with is the creation of a structure called the violence task force. The task force is an organized way to be prepared to deal with assault before further incidents take place, including sexual assault and all forms of violence, domestic and extra-domestic in the community. The idea came up at the last florida radical activist network meeting (a long, long time ago) we addressed the powerful anonymous letter the listserve received (a personal account of sexual violence in the community). we discussed what we thought our scene needed in order to support survivors and deal with and/or rehabilitate perps. we talked about what tactics had been used in the past and how we could have a concrete strategy for dealing with all types of violence in our "community". we came up with a proposal to create a taskforce expressly to deal with violence in the florida/regional "radical community" (or whatever). this is not something that is going to be dealt with quickly and cleanly and we certainly have a lot to learn. The taskforce is a tool, not a solution. the following are four tasks that the VTF can take on:

1. BASIS: clarify the language we use for these types of issues (these can/should always be updated) and realize that rarely are these forms of abuse mutually exclusive:
 - domestic violence = violations (including coercion, domination, isolation and competition) which involve one person in a relationship taking power over and trying to control another person/the relationship.
 - extra-domestic violence = violations committed outside of a personal relationship

- Phase 3: negotiation
- Offer a list of demands
 - Draft a plan of action including timeline
- Phase 4: ostracization if demands are not met

It helps for the community to have some sort of salient definition of what sexual assault is. One pretty good definition that I think covers sexual assault in it's myriad forms is: anything which makes a person feel as though they have been violated. It is also a good idea to have some sort of standard plan of action that is agreed upon for when sexual assault happens. That way the community is prepared and doesn't have to scramble around once it's happened to try to figure out what to do. It's easy to get worked up when you're scrambling and that's not a good thing. This standard plan of action can be developed through a series of discussions within the community. Recently, our fl radical community brought Rath and Yareak* here to put on a workshop on dealing with domestic violence, which they have been facilitating in many different communities. At this workshop, we came up with this list of options for dealing with domestic violence as a community:

- Physical violence/killing the perpetrator(s)
- Groups confronting abuser (if perp is male, all woman group might be most empowering)
- Facilitated meetings with perp
- Outing with flyers
- Psychological Terror (following the perp around with masks of survivors face)
- Empower survivor to leave (find shelter or safe house or give financial support)
- Ostracization of the perp (until they deal with their shit)
- Create structure before incident (including mediation groups)
- Train ourselves in self-defense, counseling and mediation
- Create a community where violence is unacceptable (have community guidelines posted)
- On-going gender based groups about sexism and violence (kickoff for male group where only woman speak)
- Create an open atmosphere (not ignoring the issue and talking about it frequently because it happens frequently)
- Call each other out on behavior

36. Do you find yourself only attracted to "Anarcho-Crusty Punk Barbie," "Alterna-Grrl Barbie," or "Hardcore-Grrl Barbie?" (The idea here being that the only woman you are attracted to fit mainstream beauty standards but just dress and do their hair alternatively and maybe have piercings and tattoos.) Do you question and challenge your internalized ideals of mainstream beauty ideals for women?
37. Have you ever heard of or discussed "sizeism" and do you think it is low on the oppression scale?
38. Are you aware of the fact that ALL woman, even in radical communities, live under the CONSTANT PRESSURE and OPPRESSION of mainstream patriarchal beauty standards?
39. Are you aware of the fact that many woman in radical communities have had and are currently dealing with eating disorders?
40. Do you make fun of "model-types" or "mainstream" woman for their appearance?

Domestic/Household

41. When was the last time you walked into your house, noticed that something was misplaced/dirty/etc. AND did something about it (didn't just walk by it, over it, away from it or leave a nasty note about it) even if it wasn't your chore or responsibility?
42. Are you constantly amazed by the magical "food fairy" who mysteriously acquires food, brings it home, puts it away, prepares it in meal form and then cleans up afterwards?
43. Do you contribute equally to domestic life and work?
44. How many of the following activities do you contribute to in your home (this is a partial list of what it takes to run a household):
- A: Sweep and mop floors and clean carpets
 - B: Wash and put away dishes
 - C: Clean stove, counters, sinks and appliances if they are messy and each time after you've prepared food
 - D: Collect money, do food shopping, put away food and make meals for people you live with
 - E: Do house laundry (kitchen towels, bathroom hand towels, rugs, etc.)
 - F: Clean up common room spaces, even if it's not your chore
 - G: Pick up other's slack
 - H: Deal with garbage, recycling, and compost
 - I: Take care of bills, rent, utilities



- J: Deal with the landscaping and gardening
 K: Clean bathrooms and make sure bathroom is clean after you use it
 L: Feed, clean up after, and take care of house pets

Children & Childcare

45. Do you spend time with kids? If you do, do you spend time with children (yours or anyone's) in a way that is gendered? (do certain things with boys and other things with girls?)
46. If you are a father, do you CO-parent your children? (Spend equal time AND energy AND effort AND money to raise them)?
47. Do you make childcare a priority? (at both activist events and in daily life)
48. Do you help make the lives of single mothers in your life and community easier by finding out if and how you can assist?
49. Have you politicized your ideas about child rearing and parenthood in radical communities? Do you believe that individuals who are in the movement have children or that the movement has children?

Multi-Category Questions:

50. When was the last time you showed a womyn how to do a task rather than doing it for her and assuming she couldn't do it?
51. When was the last time you asked a womyn to show you how to do a task?
52. Do you get emotional needs met by other wimmin, whether or not you are in a romantic relationship with them? Or do you cultivate caring, nurturing relationships with other men in which you can discuss your feelings and get your needs met by them?
53. If a womyn discusses with you or calls you out on your patriarchy, do you make an effort to be emotionally present? Listen? Not emotionally shut down? Not get defensive? Think about what she said? Admit you fucked up? Take responsibility/make reparations for the mistakes you made? Discuss your feelings and ideas with her? Apologize? Work harder on your own shit to make sure that you don't make the same mistakes again with her or other wimmin?
54. Do you look inside yourself to find out why you fucked up in these relationships and work to both change your behavior and be a better anti-patriarchy ally in the future?

Pros and Cons of Direct Confrontation:

Pro	Con
Empowerment of survivor (it feels good)	Can create martyr complex in perp
It creates a consequence/accountability	Can provoke further retaliation
It's direct action	If by males, can create protector complex
Sense of 'oppression' imposed	Only temporary consequence
Reverses role (makes perps fear)	Creates a special event rather than commonplace occurrence

Tactic #3: *Community Involvement*

Addressing sexual assault is a lot to take on by yourself. I recommend talking to people who you are close with in your community about it. It is not the responsibility of the survivor to deal with the perp. People socialized as males who still identify as males have the responsibility to end sexism and violence. You can work with the community to make up a plan of action for the community to take responsibility by addressing the assault and dealing with the perp. If there are multiple survivors with conflicting views/expectations, perhaps a safe space could be created for the to meet, discuss and come to some sort of agreement on a plan of action.

Some people from the Richmond community did a workshop on dealing with sexual assault at the Southern Girls Convention in Alabama. They recommended thinking about the process as a series of phases:

Phase 1: prevention

- expose behavior by talking with individual wimmin in the community (especially those who come in to contact the most with the perp)
- designate 'watchdogs' to help prevent and expose further behavior

Phase 2: mediation

- Mediated discussion with survivor if desired
- Community facilitated discussion about plans for action

Projects:

18. Share your experiences with men's groups, etc.
19. Help organize informational pamphlets on and procedures for what steps sexual offenders at New College should take
20. Help organize a theatre of the oppressed project on sexual assault
21. Think about objectification of women and how it can be overcome by yourself and others

Assignment:

22. Read material on sexual assault from both the survivors' and the assaulters' points of view
23. Focus on what being a survivor means, concentrate on their points of view
24. Address anyone you may have attacked, apologize, offer them the possibility to confront you, tell them about your pattern, also offer them the possibility to confront you with a group

Other options you may find appealing in a confrontation scenario would be to request from the offender that they make a written and signed statement acknowledging that they assaulted/raped you. This would be for in case you or another person wanted to press charges in the future.

Recently, I have also decided to make demands of people I am around before they assault (or before I become aware that they have assaulted). These are the demands we came up with as a local community:

- Realize that we deal with harassment constantly. Honor our survival.
- Communicate and define consent in intimate relationships. Recognize that asking and talking can be pressure, so don't be manipulative or coercive.
- Learn how to have one healthy intimate relationship before having more.
- Realize that sexual violence is prevalent in this community and work to combat this.
- Be conscious that many of us are survivors and act accordingly. Don't just be "not surprised" about our history of violations.
- Don't add a sexual dynamic if we are in a decidedly platonic relationship (ex. Cuddling).
- Try taking part in intimate relationships that aren't sexual.

55. Do you organize regular house meetings or activist meetings to resolve conflict in the house/group?
56. Do you use intimidation, yelling, getting in someone's physical space, threats or violence to get your point across? Do you create an atmosphere or violence around women or others to threaten them (i.e., throw things, break things, yell and scream, threaten, attack, tease or terrorize the animals or pets of women in your life)?
57. Do you physically, psychologically, or emotionally abuse women?
58. Do the women in your life (mothers, sisters, partners, housemates, friends, etc.) have to "remind" you or "nag" you or "yell" at you in order for you to get off your ass and take care of your responsibilities?
59. Do you talk to other men about patriarchy and your part in it?
60. When was the last time you thought about or talked about any of these issues other than after reading this questionnaire?

Scoring: ALL MEN need to work on issues of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny. However, this questionnaire may point out to you areas of particular focus or concentration for your own anti-patriarchal/sexist/misogynist process and development.



THIS IS WHAT MARCHISM LOOKS LIKE BY: BOLDY

Emilia's story: because i feel a lack of knowledge in this culture about it and because my story is different yet so the same of others. Depression, wanting to kill myself, rip my sexual organs out, slit my wrists... i mainly wanna talk about how i'm healing, how it never feels done & what my experiences were like. how i'm trying to heal myself from abuse that started as a kid. i was physically abused by my brother & it has propelled a abuse cycle in my life. finding abusive men over & over again cause ever since i was a kid i learned that my words & power were not important, there were times when my brother would break the glass windows in the bathroom door trying to get at me while i locked the door because he was so much stronger & bigger & always beat me up. No matter how hard i tried to stop him. it left me to feel very powerless with men.



Moving on to another example (I wish there weren't so many)... Here is another list of demands that were issued to a repeat sex offender in our community years ago. They have not been complied with and the perp has assaulted at least one other woman since these demands were issued. I have decided to take a similar approach to the one taken in the example above (asking a specific boy to be a mediator between perp and community) and this is yet to be actualized as well. Here are the original demands (issued at a community meeting years ago):

Intimate Relationships:

1. Let others initiate touching/ "sexual" touching
2. Rigorously apply the Antioch policy [gaining verbal or some other agreed upon form of consent before any sexual contact], realizing that asking can be pressure and ask in the least coercive manner "would you like" rather than "can I"
3. Don't sleep beside people if you haven't told them about the attacks
4. Reveal your past attacks to people you are planning to move in with
5. Reveal your past attacks [and elude to the extent to which it has affected some of the women] to people you are planning to be touchy with
6. pre-establish what kind of touching will be ok, but never assume [in the moment] that it will be ok
7. Take into account any possible signals people you are touching might be sending- uncomfortable means no
8. Be very cautious of power dynamics in your relationships

Personal:

9. Don't exclude people from activities by yourself being present at them [making them feel uncomfortable] (e.g. Food Not Bombs)
10. Get personal counseling
11. Participate in group counseling for sex offenders (e.g. at SPARCC) ← local rape crisis center
12. Keep a journal about his progress on dealing with issues of misogyny and abuse
13. Develop a goals system
14. Address your dependency issue

Support:

15. Talk to friends about how you think you are doing, etc.
16. Establish a responsibility group, a group of people you will be accountable to from now on about any possible attacks, etc.

2. You need to be PROMPT about telling people, no fuckin around even if it is hard!
3. You need to learn how to tell people these things on your own.
4. When you tell people you are a sexual assaulter you need to not use the wimmin's name unless she says she wants you to.
5. You should not expect wimmin to help you with any of this.
6. You need to realize that because you are a sexual assaulter you are threatening and you need to respect that (by acting accordingly) and think about it before you take off your clothes to swim or do anything that you may not consider sexual but could be by others.
7. When you tell wimmin that you are a sexual assaulter, you need to do it in the safest possible way. Make sure it is safe for her. Don't do it in your room. Maybe in a public place or neutral environment.
8. You need to take all the responsibility for not being in [the survivor's] space. One way you can do this is by getting in touch with [a mediator] when you are traveling and going to conferences and other large events. You can't go if [the survivor] is going to be there.
9. STOP being sexual until you can figure your shit out!
10. Go through your sexual history, dissecting it piece by piece and writing down what you find. This is an exercise for your own self-awareness.
11. Pay for [the survivor] to go to counseling.

About six months later we started wondering what was being done, but were not about to call him because we have just spent too much damn time in our lives talking to perps. This is the proposal that Midge made:

1. I want specific boys to be mediators between [the perp] and the rest of the community, which means that you all should periodically check up on him (including but not limited to finding out which of the goals has he followed through with and which hasn't he and why not) so that you can have the information readily available when a concerned persyn such as myself wants to know what is going on so that they can feel safe and comfortable.
2. The financial retribution for counseling services should come in the form of \$150 per month and can be mailed to me.
3. Give me a copy of the reading list on topics related to sexual abuse that [the perp] has come up with in the past year.
4. Let it be known that when and if other demands from other members of the community arise, those need to be addressed as well.

This Proposal has yet to be recognized

i half-ass admitted to myself
~~that~~ that i had been sexually assaulted
 while at a youth lib conference in florida.
 these lovely ladies were giving a workshop on
 Sexual assault. i was sitting in the room as they
 were talking about forms of sexual assault and i was

realizing what had happened to me. it felt
 shocking & it felt like everyone could see it on
 my face. i froze inside & freaked out. But at
 thought part i did nothing, it felt too crazy. i was with
 another abusive man at the time and it didn't fully occur
 to me and i told no one. i felt confusion yet clear at
 the same time. i was scared i would have to explain my
 story to everyone and i didn't want to explain anything, i
 or feel like i was "accusing" him of something. In a sub-culture
 where everything is questioned some things are obviously
 left out. it's hard to be a feminist & be assaulted like
 i should of been able to avoid this or get out of it
 sooner or some other bullshit which i now realize is completely

! Have been sexually assaulted/abused by about 5 men, four of them were my friends/lovers at the time, most of the time this sexual abuse went along with emotional/mental abuse & physical abuse. it's so hard to get out of abusive situations especially if it's combined with my emotional/mental abuse because they had thoughts, feelings, power ^{couldn't} even figure out what is going on anymore or who was, or how to get out and be o.k. without them. They convince me I need them & their fucked up ways. me just holding on wanting real love from them. not this fucked-up abusive shit! Since those men were my friends/lovers I trusted them thought that this is what love & trust is. Now I realize none of it was true. Now it's so hard to trust, I feel like I have a blocked heart inside.

It was decided to have 2 mediators who were to facilitate discussion, keep in on track, and enforce the ground rules. We also gave the perp the option to bring a supportive 'observer' who he was friends with and who he could follow-up with after the discussion. But, nobody wanted to be the observer. Here are the ground rules that were used for the mediation:

- This discussion is about [the survivor], what has been done to her and her needs. This is not about what has been done to [the perp]. If [the survivor] or the mediators feel like [the perp] is trailing off from this subject, they will interrupt him.
- [The survivor] will have an unlimited period of time to talk. When she is done she will say so and [the perp] should stop they will ask him to do so and [the survivor] will be able to speak again for an unlimited amount of time. It will continue like this until [the survivor] feels she has said everything she wants to. [The survivor] will have the last words.
- If [the survivor] has questions, [the perp] will need to respond the best he can to those questions [The perp] needs to not threaten [the survivor], verbally or physically. [The perp] needs to make sure he does not speak in an aggressive, loud, attacking, or confrontational manner to [the survivor] or mediators.
- [The survivor] may be very emotional. [The perp] will need to be respectful of that and not judge her feelings.
- [The survivor] has things she needs to express to [the perp]. [The perp] needs to listen even though it may be hard to hear [as in it may be hard to listen to, because you don't want to hear it]. At some point, [the survivor] may want a break. At that point, we will break and decide on a period of time and then resume discussion.
- These rules are made to protect [the survivor] and to facilitate discussion according to her needs and not to punish [the perp].

1. This is the list of demands that were given to the perp after the discussion:
 You need to tell anybody you have any kind of relationship with, are working with, or are involved with in any capacity that you ARE (not have been) a sexual assaulter. Things you specifically need to say to these people:

- That you have a history of and continue to be a sexual abuser
- That the reason you are telling them is because one of the women you assaulted requested that you tell people
- That some of the ways you are (not have known to be) sexually and mentally abusive include being manipulative, overpowering, a guilt-tripper, coercive, not respectful, forceful, intimidating, attempting to rape, sexually self-absorbed and inconsiderate.
- If they want to or need to talk to someone about it, they can get in touch with someone else who has been a designated advocate

- Think about the words manipulative, coercive, deceptive, overbearing, over-sexualized, rape and how they have been played out by you in the past and continue to be played out by you.
- Reconsider the Antioch policy (which says that you should ask for consent for all physical contact in a non-coercive way, meaning you should say something like "would you like to..." rather than "can i...")

The whole experience was very positive for me. I didn't have to convince him of anything. He didn't question my judgment of what happened. He apologized and assured me that he would follow through with all of my requests. That of course remained to be seen, but I felt empowered cause I was taking care of myself.

The only other confrontation I have been involved in was my friend's mediated discussion with a guy who had sexually abused her for a significant time and who she hadn't talked to in over a year. She had written him a letter previously about it, to get some stuff off her chest. I had also talked to him about it several times over the course of the past year and three months. He had previously made a list of goals that he wanted to accomplish as follows and given them to the survivor and myself:

1. write [the survivor]
2. do whatever it takes for [the survivor] to forgive me
3. learn to forgive
4. admit to sexual partners that I sexually assaulted and mentally abused (don't use survivor's name) and give advocate option
5. read transforming a rape culture and stopping rape by april
6. keep journal of sexual interactions
7. start local men's group
8. open dialogue with past partners about assault and mental abuse
9. work on listening skills
10. keep on reading on male violence and privilege



So then it turned out we all happened to be in the same town (which is strange because we all live in different places and it wasn't the place where any of us lived) so the survivor decided to call for a mediated discussion. We had about 36 hours to prepare.

(near paragraph)

Healing what along road it's been, i remember when i truly couldn't be in denial anymore. All the fears started to come & they haven't stopped, it's been 2 1/2 years. The tears feel like they will never end & i wonder how one could ever be so hurt. But here i am writing this & it feels so important to me. When i thought I was a feminist & feminists don't get sexually assaulted. I was wrong, so wrong. It's tricky, they are tricky, these "supposive" feminist men. They consumed so much of me, broke me into pieces & i'm just trying to put them back together. i thought i had ended all abusive relationships/friendships over a year ago, but just about 4 months ago i made new friend & he sexually assaulted me, i felt stupid like how can then happen again. ☆ it takes a long time to see it all clearly. i'm still dis-covering lots of shame & denial & thinking it was my fault. Then came the anger, it over took me, surged through me & i

just tried to let it come. it was a very empowering
 time for me realizing that they are the ones
 at fault not me. that i am fuckin' angry.
 and i can use that as fuel to heal me.
 and confront & close things with them. and also
 during parts of that extreme anger i wanted to
 die it was so intense. the anger came from
 me having memories, thought & body memories &
 i felt sick so sick. when i started to remember it
 was so hard & hurt so bad & i could barely
 function.

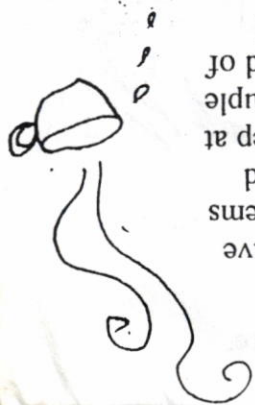
i was so depressed. my memories & self & feelings
 were so repressed. and i just wanted to vomit &
 thought all contact was gross & bad. finally the
 really intense anger passed. but i was completely A-sexual
 i couldn't even sleep with friends or mine that
 were girls with out slipping out & waking up in the
 night with intense fears of someone in my bed
 waiting to hurt me.

In the morning, i definitely felt weird about what had happened, but i didn't have
 a chance to talk to him until later that night. It felt good not to wait any longer. It seems
 best to do it as soon as you are ready to. His reaction was a combination of shock and
 remorse. The shock part seemed to corroborate the conclusion that he had been asleep at
 the time. He said he was sorry and i accepted his apology. Although it took me a couple
 weeks to feel pretty comfortable around him again. I think the reasons that this period of
 time was so short is because the incident itself was relatively short and mild and that i
 was able to confront him soon after the fact.

The second time i did it, i happened to be staying in the same town as this boy
 who sexually abused me one time. It had happened almost a year ago, but i remained
 friends with this kid the whole time despite the fact that i felt awkward around him a lot
 of the time. I didn't see him that often and it was just easier for me to ignore it most of
 the time. I had also been using excuses like 'he's got a lot going on in his life right now,
 so i shouldn't confront him about it yet...' But i had been thinking about it quite a bit,
 was in the same town as him, and felt weird enough about it to finally decide to confront
 him. Something else that contributed to the decision was that i had recently talked to
 another woman who he had sexually assaulted. The fact that i had not been the first
 compelled me a bit more (not that i should have needed any more of a reason because
 one time is enough).

I asked a good friend of mine to be present during the discussion. I wanted the
 discussion to be pretty informal, but i definitely had certain things i wanted to say, and i
 had written out on a piece of paper certain things that i wanted him to follow through
 with after the discussion. The paper i gave to him said:

- Tell people you are currently involved with and those that you become intimately involved with in the future that you have sexually abused women (but don't use my name) and have sexually abusive tendencies such as being manipulative and sexually overbearing.
- Think about how you treat women who you are interested in sexually or think are physically attractive. Are you respectful to them? Are you upfront about your intention and feelings or are you deceptive? Do you watch out for their feeling and sexual boundaries (in their words and their body language)?



I think that maybe after trauma or assault, we close off certain parts of our bodies and do not let adequate energy pass through them. In an effort to revitalize my organs that have been shut down for years I practice yoga as well as chakra meditation. They go hand in hand; I do about 45 minutes of yoga each day followed by maybe 15 minutes of chakra meditation. I have been doing this schedule for about 6 months, and I am just now beginning to reap some real benefits from the whole lifestyle. There are also massage techniques and other forms of energy work that focus specifically on the different chakras, which I have limited experience with but it is very possible to find a practitioner who is aware of these techniques and work with them.

Another energetic phenomenon that seems to happen as a result of violence, is that a person's energy field is torn so that they are made more vulnerable to violations in the future. Time and body work can help weave this energy field back together, but in the meantime, there are some exercises that a person can do to protect themselves. One that I have done myself is invented an alternate personality which is going to protect me when I want it to. Her name is annicka. She doesn't take anyone's shit, and when I feel the slightest bit uncomfortable or vulnerable in any sort of situation, when it is not always so easy for me to be empowered and super-assertive, I know that I can call in annicka and she will be assertive because that is how I made her.



FORGIVENESS:
(yourself &
others)
POSSIBLY
THE BEST
GIFT TO
GIVE TO
YOURSELF
♡

Tactic #2: Confrontation

Confrontation can be done in many forms. It could be a letter, a phone call or a face to face discussion, either mediated or informal. I have only chosen the latter. Although I have known people who have started with a letter and worked up to a mediated discussion.

The first time I confronted one of my assailants was quite recently actually, about a year and a half ago. He was a good friend of mine that I was smooching with. At that point in my life, I was aware that I was in the midst of an unhealthy sexual pattern so I was definitely setting boundaries. He stayed at my house one night after we had been drinking and I woke up in the middle of the night with him touching me. I don't remember what I did; I was pretty out of it and I remember thinking he was asleep.

These men coerced me & mentally abused me.
They tried to rape me.
They filthy fucked me & came all over my face.
They ripped off my clothes & they stuck their
hands down my pants after I couldn't hold
their hands down anymore. . . THEY
DID SO MANY MANY MANY VIOLATING
THINGS TO ME THAT I TRIED TO STOP.
THAT I ~~I~~ DID NOT WANT. THEY DID
NOT LISTEN EVER. They didn't listen to
NO or that doesn't make me feel comfortable or
I don't think we should be doing this. They
didn't listen to body language or tears. They
didn't listen. They forced & coerced. And even
assaulted me after I told them I had been sexually
assaulted & was scarred. They assaulted me still.
They only cared for themselves & of themselves.
They knew they all knew and didn't care &
wouldn't stop. And it fuckin' hurts. None of them
respected me or women. I have in a letter &

mediated discussion only confronted me & them.
 The One who sexually abused me a lot. It was amazing →
 for me to write the letter. I no longer allowed him to
 control me $\frac{1}{2}$ the meeting let me take my power
 back in person. I debated a lot about the letter &
 decided I only wanted to be about what I needed
 that it wasn't gonna be about him changing or healing.
 Just about me. That's what the mediated discussion
 was about also me & what I needed to do to move on.
 So now I heal. And function dis-functionally sexually.
 It's weird how it can feel like they can wrap
 themselves around my whole being. I'm so used
 to being abused and being an erotic robot, who
 leather body.

erotic robot: using the body sexually without
 a soul, feelings, or needs. being sexually for others and
 not myself. leaving ones body.

Here is a summation of tactics that I have some experience with using after the
 initial legwork of acknowledging the sexual abuse. I see them as not mutually exclusive
 and essential to the holistic process of dis-recovery. The order in which I have presented
 them was a logical sequence for me to use (since I love logic). I think it's best to start
 with the personal stuff, and then move on to the interpersonal and political when and if it
 seems appropriate.

Tactic #1: Bodywork, Belly dancing and Yoga

A big step for me in dis-recovery was just making a commitment to my health. It
 was about this time when I began to realize how sexual abuse in the past was continuing
 to affect my life. I got tested and ended up without any sexually transmitted infections.
 But I hated my body and was very depressed and angry inside. There is actually a high
 correlation between sexual abuse and disordered eating...

I took a belly dancing lessons from my friend last year. I had been run over by a
 car and broken my leg, which really brought my issues with my body to a head. Belly
 dancing turned out to be something that enabled me to use my body in a fun and
 energetic way which wasn't competitive and didn't enforce outlandish standards about
 how my body was supposed to look and act. I am sure that the majority of organized
 belly dancing classes out there aren't like what I experienced and enforce the beauty myth
 and unrealistic expectations, but a savvy group of ladies can create of belly dancing
 troupe of their own minus all the bullshit. My all time favorite belly dancing music is
 Sleater Kinney. It is also worth it to try to locate some good gypsy tunes.

I saw a few Ayurvedic physicians a few years back. The first prescribed that I
 study yoga. I found a free class and have been doing yoga regularly on my own since
 then. The new yoga instructors that I am taking classes from are pretty amazing. I am
 beginning to realize the mind/body connection. It's because of this that I think yoga is
 one of the best things that you can do for yourself.



to move
 things
 to move

A Celebration Of My Healing - Spiritual Expression

Today I celebrate.

I celebrate that I listen to others!

I celebrate that I am heard!

I celebrate breaking the silence!

I celebrate speaking my truth!

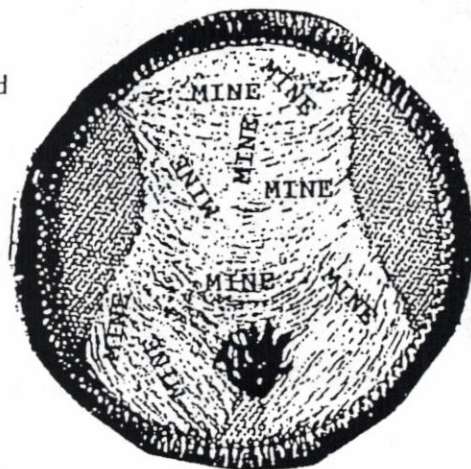
I may dance, sing, go for a walk, buy fresh cut flowers, call a friend. I may paint a picture of myself with others. I may go out to dinner with a friend.

Today I celebrate the spirit of freedom that comes from:

~ speaking with others.

~ listening to others.

I note in my workbook how I celebrated and how I felt as I celebrated.



I Reclaim My Hidden Dreams

While I was being sexually abused, as a way to stay safe, I stopped myself from dreaming.

As a result of the abuse

- ~ I thought the future would always be as painful as the present.
- ~ I stopped creating a future for me.

As I heal

- ~ I realize that I have always had dreams.
- ~ I understand my dreams do not have to stay hidden.
- ~ I retrieve old dreams and create new dreams.
- ~ I remember the abuse, I also remember the dreams.
- ~ I dream again.

I welcome and embrace my dreams, my dreaming!

I reclaim my hidden dreams!

Sometimes

- ~ I still stop my dreams about healthy friendships, fulfilling work, loves, home and future.
- ~ I stop myself from dreaming about the small everyday things like gardening, walking, enjoying the beauty of the lakes, a sunset or the quiet of the early morning.

i've spent so much time being a ^{erotic} ~~sexual~~ robot & not exploring what i wanted. i never knew that i could be who i wanted to be sexually. that these standards of sex & sexuality weren't mine & that they didn't need to be. i didn't have to "perform" for others but i felt obligated to. my female socialization has played itself out so well in my sexual experiences. that it is my duty to please them. that i am here purely for their pleasure. NOT my own. i've never had an orgasm with someone. i've had so few positive sexual experiences. Sometimes inside i feel tainted, all tainted. Sometimes i feel like i need to masturbate. Just so that i can prove to myself that i can still be a sexual being even though sometimes masturbation feels all messed up & contaminated with other people's thoughts & other people's sexual beings & memories of my ^{bad} sexual experiences.

Sometimes it feels weird to not be sexually turned on; sometimes I think I masturbate cause it feels good sometimes; I want so badly to feel good sexually. To feel sexually whole. I am so scared so closed up, the thought of a man touching me sexually or sensually scars the shit out of me. I want physical comfort from men yet I am completely scared of it. It's difficult to be so in between. To feel like I'll never be able to be close sexually with someone because of my fears.

I took some time about a year ago to really get in touch with all of this & all of me. I focused only on loving myself & accepting myself. And believing that I can find someone sexually that will be understanding & patient. I still struggle with re-membering these things with my "Real" eyes.

Laughing, I heal - I

What gets in the way when I play?

How do I feel about playing?

Is life supposed to be serious all the time?

What happens when I laugh with friends?

I love to laugh!

I love to play!

I love

- laughter bubbling up inside of me.
 - the sun moving on the grass.
 - giggling with friends.
 - belly laughing with those I love.

I share

- laughter,
 - humor,
 - play,

with my friends and myself.
 I am freer, happier, more playful.

I get when I think of my small, inner person
 and I laugh
 - when I see children playing.
 - when I slide and swing.
 - when I dance until I am breathless
 - when I watch my pet playing.

How do I treat myself when I am not in a
 laughing mood?
 How do I treat myself when I want to laugh
 and giggle?
 I write or create an image of what prevents
 me from playing. I also create an image of
 myself playing. What do the two images
 tell me?



Spiritual Expression

When I connect with the world of nature around me, I am reminded of something greater than myself.

I give myself the gift of beauty, wonder, awe and delight.

On a walk I discover that the trees, birds or the sky remind me that I am not alone.

I create an image of how the natural world reminds me that I am not alone.

or -

I find a favorite photograph or nature postcard to remind myself I am not alone.

I find some way to keep my image visible to me.

This reminds me to
~ connect with nature each day.

~ reach for a connection with something greater than myself.



Out Of Isolation

When the abuse happened,
I was alone, isolated from others.

Sometimes

- I want to stay alone.
- I do not trust others.
- I do not want others to witness my pain.
- I am afraid to ask others into my life.
- I believe that others do not want to be with me.

I want people in my life who will:

LAUGH WITH ME

HOLD ME

DREAM WITH ME

CARE FOR ME

PLAY WITH ME

ENCOURAGE ME

LISTEN TO ME

GIVE ME FEEDBACK

TALK TO ME

SHARE WITH ME

CREATE WITH ME

BE WITH ME

I want a support community in my life.

I can learn to trust others,

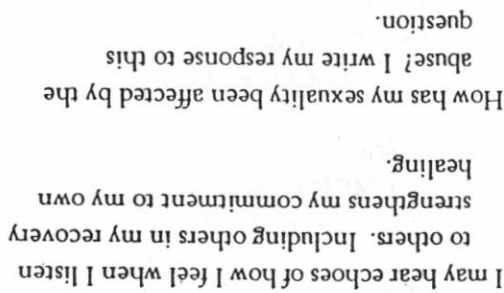
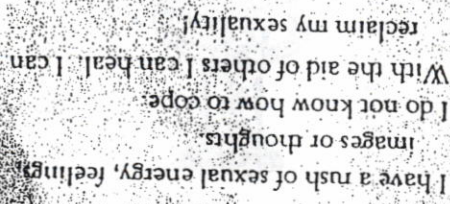
- ~ be with others,
- ~ allow others to witness my loss,
- ~ and witness the healing of others.

I can learn that

- ~ others want to be with me,
- ~ that I have something to offer,
- ~ and that I deserve a support network.

after this time ~~was~~ sexual with someone who was my friend & who i was in love with. in the beginning it was good but then things inside me started to break down & it was really hard to communicate. and i was still dealing with the part of me that felt that i needed to be someone i wasn't sexually. it was hard to stay in my body. it was hard to open.

Really re-membering to keep focus on myself has helped me. also my beautiful friend midge has probably been the best support & helped me heal so much & remember that i am the one who is important. She also taught me to belly dance. which just can make one so in love with herself & body ♡ in combination with Sleater Kinney what could be better? it has really helped me to



I feel ignorant about my sexuality. I was deeply affected by the abuse. I feel shame. I feel invaded and ignored. I feel depleted and wounded beyond rational belief.

Healing sexually is tough but not impossible. I feel crippled because of the sexual abuse and I wonder if others feel this way. I need to talk with other survivors and find out what effects they have experienced.

see the patterns of these abusive men, I have found
and try to have healthier, more supportive male
friends. It seems to take so much time to
heal & deal. I feel like I take so many
steps forward & fall back a few again
but overall I have come so very far.
I feel like a lot of people & the activist
community has made this really hard.
"like just because I can't organize because I'm
too depressed from being sexually assaulted is
not ok." Some women have heard so
beautifully supportive in the activist community
and I thank all of you! ▽

Taking Care Of My Needs - 1

Healing, I discover lots of needs and wants for my life.

I list my needs and wants and note how to get them met.

Do I need the support of a group?
I can visit support groups to find ones I like.

Do I need more time to myself?
I can find 15 minutes a day for me.

Do I need more play or music in my life?
I can get a new tape that makes me feel good.

Ways I might take care of my needs:

- educate myself about sexual abuse and exploitation,
- ask questions,
- talk with others,
- talk with other survivors,
- speak my truth.

I might take care of myself by:

- finding out if there are professionals in my location, who are trained to work with survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Do I need to get connected to other survivors?

I can call a helpline and check out resources.

Do I need to have more fun?

I can call a friend and make plans to get together.

In the space below I name my needs and write how I can get these needs met.

Other ways I can take care of my needs are to eat well, exercise, rest and play.

As I learn to find my inner harmony, a natural balance evolves in my life.

In a sexually abusive relationship

I learned that

- what I wanted, the abuse to stop, did not matter.
- what I cared about, feeling safe and protected, did not matter.
- who I was, someone vulnerable, did not matter.

I want to learn

- to know what I want.
- to ask for what I want.
- to joyfully accept.
- to give when I want to give.

This book made me realize that i wasn't the only one with these feelings & experiences. That i could heal, & move on with my life. it helped me process my trust issues, denial, body memories, almost every aspect of sexual abuse. It's a pretty amazing book that allows one a really open space for expressing things in your own way. Lots of times i made art to work with issues. it helped me see my fears & ^{there} reclaim a safe space for them. to realize now i can be o.k. & trust, now i don't have to be a victim anymore. that i can change my patterns, my life, myself. i can make my own rules & ideas about sex & my own sexualness & respect myself. that i don't need to be with someone sexually if they can't respect me.



We are all divine

Hold you
unholy parts more
gently

our feelings need to be respected.

Remember your body & self are

Sacred

Justish
the
Shame

! don't claim that self-love is easy or any of this.
! never even knew how to begin to love myself.
! was always like how does one even do that. it
has helped me to live alone, take lots of nature walks,
do things that make me feel good and remember to
not be so hard on myself. accepting me is important.
ya know we are all in a process & i am learning to embrace my
own

Learning To Express My Anger - 1

Self-esteem,
and Pride
of her sex

I am learning to name, feel and express my
anger and rage.
I find that sometimes I have fearful feelings
about my anger.
When I acknowledge that I am afraid I may
get out of control with my angry feelings,
or that I may want to hurt someone else or
myself, I can start to free myself from my
fear about anger.



I feel angry that I was sexually abused and I
am learning to express that rage.

Today I choose one of the following:
I write down my fears about my angry, rageful
feelings.
or -
I create an image of my fear about my anger
and rage.
or -
I jot down a few of the reasons I do not like
to get angry.



I am learning
that I do not need to destroy myself
or others when I am angry.
I can express my feelings of rage and
anger in ways that are respectful to
myself and others.
that we anger does not consume me
I do not need to act on those
negative thoughts and fantasies.
I am in CHARGE of my anger!

Definition
from
Mary
Daly's
Vicki
daly

I am aware that some lines
I feel a surge of angry or rageful
feelings.
some of my angry feelings are so
intense that I feel frightened.
I have fantasies and thoughts that are
destructive or harmful toward others
or myself.
I feel like I'm being consumed
I do not know what to do.

Emilia's
workbook
for
discovery

Boundaries - 1

Part of trusting myself is setting limits. Part of setting limits is learning to say NO. Saying NO when it is in my best interest to say NO facilitates learning to trust myself. Learning to say NO in difficult times and places is part of my recovery.

As I grow I can practice saying NO.

To learn how to say NO I can watch a two year old say no.

I can learn to say NO without apology.

I can learn to say NO without guilt.

Today I set some limits. I practice saying NO one to three times today.

I pay attention to how I feel as I say NO.

I write or create an image of myself as I learn to say NO.

When I was abused, my trust was destroyed as my physical, mental, emotional and spiritual boundaries were invaded. Learning to trust myself I establish boundaries and private space in my life.

I am learning that I can set limits and boundaries

- on how I am touched,
- on my thoughts,
- on my feelings.

I can choose

- what spiritual tradition I want to create in my life.

PRUDE:
endowed with
Practical/
Passionate
Wisdom...
insists upon
the Integrity,

Discovering and creating boundaries empowers me.

- I am empowered as I start to trust myself.
- I am empowered when I recognize my limits.
- I am empowered when I establish boundaries.
- I am empowered when I tell others what my boundaries are.
- I am empowered as I establish private space for myself.

I can say

- No, that doesn't work for me
- Do not touch me
- I do not want to talk about that right now.

Ever
Since
I was
12
By
Midge

sexual 'partners' of mine have been doing things to me that I didn't want done, but it took me until I was 18 to use the words 'sexual abuse' to describe these experiences. It took me another year to feel secure using those words. I started trusting my judgment when I took the time to go through my sexual history piece by piece (as much as I could remember and bear to think about), writing much of it down. Through this process, I have determined that multiple boys have sexually abused me, and I can remember an incident where I believe I sexually abused a boy (the book *The Sexual Healing Journey* helped me figure out what in my past 'counts' as sexual abuse because it defines many forms of it).

It took me seven years just to realize it was abuse. Up until that point I just thought that was what sex was like; I didn't even question it at the time. This perpetuated a habit of not only denying myself sexual pleasure, but denying myself sexual comfort. Both sexual comfort and sexual pleasure were foreign concepts to me. Following relationships played out in a similar way, as I overlooked my sexual discomfort for the sake of functioning sexually in the ways in which my partners wanted me to. I began to fulfill the role of the stereotypically coy female; I was very slow to respond to the sexual abuse.

What I see as the turning point in this story, and my first step in the right direction, is the period of time where I only functioned sexually partially. While, ideally I would like to function sexually in a healthy way, this was definitely my first step towards just that by taking some control and setting up certain boundaries. By age 14, I had started banning certain sex acts from my repertoire starting with the ones that characterized the most traumatic sexual abuse in my past. Eventually, at age 16, I adopted an all-out 'no kissing policy.'

A year and a half later the story takes another turn. I decided that enough was enough, and that I was going to function in sexual situations once again in an attempt to be 'normal.' I got into a relationship and had sex for the first time in over two years. Since I was trying to function sexually again, I was verbally consenting to the sex, but I was not comfortable with a lot of what went on and definitely experienced no pleasure. I was trying to function as a sexual robot by doing what I thought I should do and not what I felt like doing. But trying to be normally robotic didn't work; there was no covering up my past. This is when I started to experience what I call 'the flashes.'

The flashes aren't flashbacks so much as they are flashes of time where it almost seems like my real desires break into reality to remind me of themselves (by recently looking through the book *The Courage to Heal*, I learned that these are called 'body memories'). So basically what happens is that I am in a sexual situation that I don't want to be in, and I have usually distanced myself from my body to a certain extent. And it is like a sudden flash in my mind that makes me stop immediately without really thinking, remove myself from the situation, and have some sort of super-emotional response like crying or intense feelings of shame. I am not thinking about anything clearly when this happens; it is all very subconscious and they seem to come out of the blue.

Even though I have experienced body memories over the course of the past year, I am only now beginning to understand what is going on by acknowledging what happened to me in the past. Now I can look back and figure out why I had the body memories at the times when I had them. Like, either the room or the lighting was really similar to the environment where abuse occurred in my past or I was in a reminiscent position, etc.

Nevertheless, the first time it happened, at age 17, I really wondered what was going on. I thought, maybe I had been sexually abused and had forgotten about it. I suppose this is sort of what happened, I hadn't forgotten what happened, I just hadn't admitted what actually did happen. Needless to say, it was very awkward when I was unable to explain the situation to my partner because I did not understand it myself. On a side note, I later brought it to my partner's attention that most of my sexual experiences in the past had not been positive. He acted like I was crazy. I don't think he could understand how a sexual experience could not be positive. I wasn't prepared at that point to go into it with him.

The process of dis-covering my sexual self after abuse has been similar to the process of getting over disordered eating. When I was searching for how-to, what I came across was 'eat when you are hungry, don't when you aren't.' It seems like a simple concept, but I was flabbergasted because that hunger-impulse was the exact thing I had been suppressing for years, and I had done such a good job that I had no idea what real hunger (and even satisfaction) was anymore (I still don't really know). So, I either under-eat because I had become so accustomed to ignoring the hunger impulse or overeat because I was/am unable to acknowledge the full impulse. Relating this back to the sex issue, most girls aren't raised with, and some womyn never learn, the concept of sexual pleasure. Maybe it is a typically western (I mean western culture) female thing to do to deny yourself sexual pleasure. I think it's part of our socialization, to be coy, sexually submissive, etc. And, when you are recovering from disordered sex, or having sex that you consistently receive no pleasure from but subjecting your body to it just the same, what you are supposed to do is, 'do what you want sexually, what gives you pleasure and don't do what doesn't.' This is the basis for consensual sex, right? It seems simple, but to someone who has been repressing themselves as a sexual being this is incomprehensible. So you end up either or-not functioning sexually at all because you can't tell what would give you pleasure, or being in sexual situations that you don't want to be in because you can't tell what you don't want.

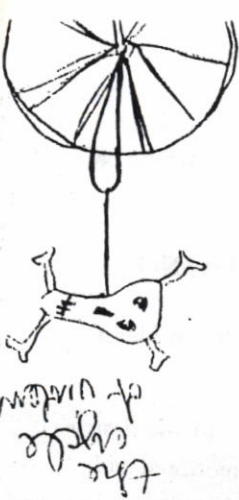
I still don't know what I want sexually and remain more or less completely sexually dysfunctional. While it has helped me understand myself tremendously to go through the nitty-gritty of my history, it's still going to take me some time to find out where I stand sexually and become who I want to be and feel comfortable being sexually. I am now no longer interested in being with someone who can not or is unwilling to try to understand my past and work with patience within the limitations it has placed on me. I know that what happened is not my fault and I think it is everyone's responsibility to combat sexual abuse, not merely the responsibility of people who have been most affected by it.

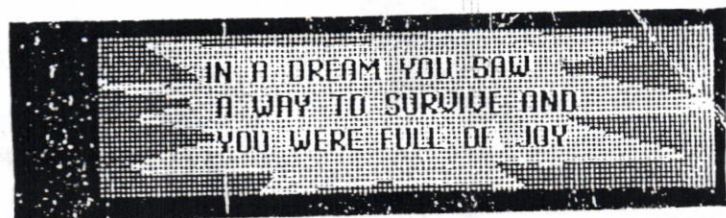
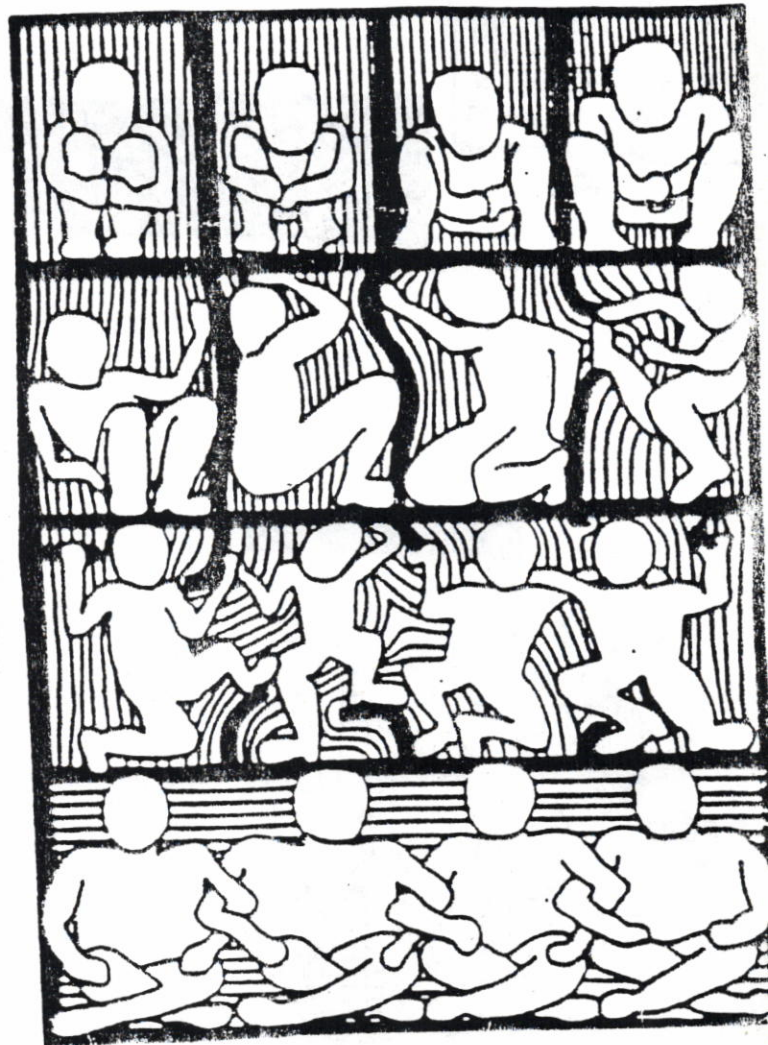
Am I a rapist?

- Have I ever used physical force to have sex (not limited to intercourse) with my partner, wife, date or anyone else?
- Have I ever made assumptions about what is OK in the context of a given relationship and acted on those assumptions without communicating beforehand?
- Have I ever avoided communication in avoidance of rejection?
- Have I ever used intimidation (including unspoken threats implied by size, strength, overbearing posture, lack of eye contact, etc.) to have sex?
- Have I used a position of power or financial advantage to have sex?
- Have I taken advantage of someone sexually (such as having sex with someone whose judgment was impaired by being drunk or emotionally upset)?
- Have I not listened to a person saying 'no' and asked repeatedly or badgered them to say 'yes' to my sexual advances?
- Have I been physically sexually suggestive with someone (such as pinching, patting, touching or pressing against them) in an unwelcome way?
- Have I been verbally sexual with someone (such as making sexual remarks or whistling) in an unwelcome way?
- Have I condoned rape by telling or laughing at rape jokes?
- Have I condoned rape by seeing it as entertainment in movies or TV?
- Have I talked, thought or fantasized about rape as a sexual act rather than as an act of violence?
- Have I encouraged anyone in doing any of the above (such as by laughing or remaining silent)?

As rapists we can... **CHOOSE TO NOT RAPE ANYMORE**

- Acknowledge our actions and take responsibility for them.
- Support agencies, groups and individuals working to stop sexual violence.
- Strive to be clear in our daily personal and social interactions.



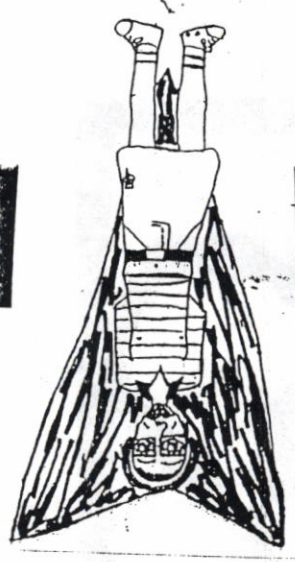


People in sexually advantaged positions (like who've never experienced sexual abuse themselves) need to make an effort to understand sexual abuse and symptoms of female socialization and compensate for it in their relationships however they see fit. It helps to be more educated about what sexual abuse is in all of it's many forms (check out *The Sexual Healing Journey*) and also to be more educated about what consensual, comfortable and pleasurable sex can be like. I also expect partners to practice something beyond the 'ask beforehand' policy. For sex to be consensual, there must be more than verbal consent. I think there needs to be a certain constant fine-tuned awareness of body language and other subtle extra-verbal cues in order to gauge comfort. It helps to have knowledge of your partner's sexual history to some extent (of course this hinges on whether they have admitted the truth of their sexual history to themselves). And, if they do have a history of sexual abuse, knowledge of certain things (behaviors or settings) that may trigger body memories is important. Use more than your ears to sense if someone is sexually comfortable and don't assume that because someone isn't saying 'no' that it is ok.



what doesn't kill you
makes you stronger

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